



# SOUTHEAST NEWS

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## **Welcome to Two of Our Three New Conference Associates!**

At its meeting on June 13, 1997, prior to the Annual Meeting of the Conference, the Board of Directors voted unanimously to hire two of the three 1/3-time conference associate positions. For the position of conference associate for congregational renewal and development, we have called Reverend Fred W. Coulter, currently in a Ph.D. program in Family Studies at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. For the position of conference associate for spiritual development and community building, we have called Ms. Joyce Hollyday, who is a candidate for a Masters of Divinity degree at Candler Theological Seminary.

Fred came to Knoxville from Connecticut, where he had last served as pastor of the First Congregational Church, UCC in Ledyard for nine years. Prior to that, Fred had served for five years as associate minister at the Congregational Church of Green Farms in Westport, Connecticut, and before that in Christian Education and youth ministries in two congregations in Massachusetts. Fred earned his B.A. in Psychology from the University of Rhode Island in 1976, and a Master of Divinity from Andover Newton Theological School in 1980. He brings to the position of conference associate a strong sense of himself as the "yeast" which, stirred into the ministries of the Southeast Conference, will cause new gifts and new opportunities to rise in our midst. He has a deep commitment to the United Church of Christ, and many gifts and skills with which he will engage the challenge of how to renew and develop congregations throughout the Conference. He will assist the conference minister in providing a pastoral presence in the Tennessee area.

Joyce, in addition to being enrolled in a Master of Divinity program at the Candler School of Theology, is an adjunct professor of Homiletics at Columbia Theological Seminary, and has served as a speaker and retreat leader in the United States and internationally, on community social justice,

faith, politics and women's issues. From 1978 to 1993 she served as an associate editor for *Sojourners* magazine, and she has authored a number of articles and publications. Her most recent book is entitled *Then Shall Your Light Rise*. It focuses on spiritual formation and social witness. In 1994-1995 Joyce staffed an advocacy and support program for battered women.

Joyce brings to this position excellent gifts as a writer and spiritual guide, and looks forward to leading people of the Southeast Conference in scripture study, prayer and theological reflection on their lives and the world. Joyce will assist the conference minister in providing a pastoral presence in the Georgia/South Carolina Association and will be developing programs for spiritual renewal and community building Conference-wide.

The Personnel Committee has completed interviewing for the third one-third-time conference associate position, conference associate for mission development and UCC identity. They will be making recommendations to the Board of Directors for filing that position at its meeting on September 12 and 13.

The Southeast Conference is blessed with an abundance of talents in ministry. The excellence of Fred and Joyce, and their gifts and qualifications for ministry are yet another indication of how fortunate we are! Please make every effort to welcome Joyce and Fred on our staff.

## **New Administrative Assistant for SEC**

We welcome a new support staff person to the Conference Office staff! Geraldine P. Ryons-Hudson (Gerri) was introduced to the Southeast Conference at our Annual Meeting in June. Gerri hails from Philadelphia, PA and moved to Lilburn due to her husband James' promotion and transfer with the Inspector General's Office of the Small Business Administration. Gerri and James are the proud parents of Nicole, 18, Aiesha, 17, and James, 11, and Gerri enjoys travel, reading and movie watching.

She took time to raise her family and when she returned to the workforce, she looked for something that involved children and service. As a result she went to work as the administrative assistant for the Children's Services Department of United Cerebral Palsy Association for seven years, leaving to relocate in Georgia one year ago.

Gerri comes to us with high praise from her former employers. I (Nan) worked with her through the Conference Annual Meeting and found her to be a delight! She is well centered, has a good sense of humor, is a steady worker, is organized and enjoys a challenge. She is also a great

observer and a good judge of people. Her secretarial skills are excellent, and she knows computers well.

I watched Gerri move easily through the Annual Meeting, enjoying her time with you. She is looking forward to getting to know you, the people of the Southeast Conference, as you get to know her.

## **Association Annual Meetings Coming Up**

All four of the associations of the Southeast Conference will have their annual gatherings during September and October. These are important times of gathering to both conduct the business of the associations and to share in fellowship with one another as brothers and sisters in faith. Plan now to attend (and take pictures and send them and news items to the *Southeast News* at the Conference address). Here are the dates and locations:

Alabama/Tennessee will meet Friday/Saturday, September 5-6 at First Congregational Church, Birmingham, AL

Georgia/South Carolina will meet Friday/Saturday, September 12-13 at Congregational, Midway, GA

South Alabama/Northwest Florida will meet Saturday, October 4 at Antioch Congregational, Andalusia, AL

East Alabama/West Georgia will meet Saturday, October 18 at United, LaGrange, GA

## **“AFFIRMING FAITH”: New Conference Materials are in the Conference Office**

Yes, they're here! The Conference is pleased to announce that we have the “Affirming Faith” confirmation materials available, at a substantial discount of 40%. That means the leaders' guide cost is only \$24.95 and the students' books, \$10.95. Shipping/postage will be an additional \$5.00.

These materials, which were well received at the Annual Meeting of the Conference, are an excellent way to organize a confirmation class, as well as organizing adult study classes around issues of United Church of Christ identity.

We encourage you to order this material for an adult class, for confirmation or for other uses. Don't let this opportunity for discounted

materials pass you by! Call us at the Conference office – (800) 807-1993 – to order.

## ***Letter from the Conference Minister***

Dear Friends,

The 1997 Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference at Shocco Springs was quite a gathering! The theme was “The Tree Bears the Fruit: A Focus on Christian Education.” The local arrangements were capably handled by the three churches closest to Shocco Springs, First Congregational in Talladega and First Congregational and Pilgrim Congregational in Birmingham. The members of these congregations outdid themselves in helping us with the local arrangements. This was the first Annual Meeting which we had organized in a “Faith Works” style, and we have come away from our first effort with this model with some important learnings.

The most important of those learnings is the joy and dynamism of our fellowship infects all that we do and gives us strength to continue the ministries of the United Church of Christ. Many of you reported with great appreciation, that the workshops were helpful and very informative. Many of the evaluations noted that the musical introduction to the Southeast Conference, our program from Saturday night, was the best program like this that we had ever had. From praise music to classical hymnody, from gospel to oldie goldies, it was a magnificent review of who we are, ably moderated by Milton Hurst and Roger Robbennolt.

Please circle your calendars for Annual Meeting 1998, which will take place June 12, 1998 through June 14, 1998. Our next Annual Meeting will be organized around a theme through which we will present an overview of the United Church of Christ and the rich array of resources which are available to us through the UCC, as we develop our ministries together and seek to reach out in mission.

It is always a pleasure to gather with people from throughout the Conference!

In Christ,  
Timothy C. Downs  
Conference Minister

## ***Message from the Moderator***

*“Then the angel showed me the river of life, as clear as crystal. Following from the throne of God and the Lamb, down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”*

*Revelation 22:1-2*

The aforementioned scripture was the basis for the theme of the Twenty-first General Synod – Healing of the Nations. This was indeed a very historic Synod with the vote to approve the amendments to the constitution, which will change the structure of the United Church of Christ. The approved constitution, by the General Synod, will become effective upon ratification by two-thirds of the 39 conferences; acceptances by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and the United Church Board for World Ministries, concurrence by the Pension Boards, UCC and the United Church Foundation, and a date to be determined by the General Synod. The next General Synod, the twenty-second, will be held June 29-July 5, 1999 in Providence, Rhode Island.

Many other resolutions and action items were approved and a few failed, but I will not take time or space to delineate. Throughout the year you will hear more about those items.

Several other highlights were the participation of the Fisk Jubilee Singers in concert; the participation of all the delegates, guests and visitors in a presentation of the film *The Color of Fear* along with the celebration of the gifts of the Rev. Yvonne Delk and presentation of the Living Legends Awards to prominent African Americans by the United Black Christians and the Commission for Racial, Economic and Justice.

The Southeast Conference was well represented at the Synod. We had four delegates – Rev. Elizabeth Clement, First Church, Atlanta; Rev. Dan Rosemergy, Brookmeade Congregational, Nashville; Rev. Dorothy Gager, Howard Congregational, Nashville; Gary Myers, First Church, Birmingham; plus two associate delegates – Rev. Dr. Timothy Downs, our conference minister, and myself as your moderator. Of course, there were others there, including Rev. Joyce Myers Brown, the outgoing chair of the Commission for Women in Church and Society, who joined in the celebration with the three honored laywomen from the Southeast Conference – Nancy Sales, Ruth Peeples, and yours truly. The Rev. Dick Sales was there along with Ed Carl Neal and the Rev. Holly Nelson, elected to serve as a member of the UCC Executive Council. Congratulations to Holly!

Each day began and ended with worship – many sermons, and of course, there were many luncheons and dinners. I wish each of you could have joined us for just one day at this big event in the life of our church.

## **Reflections on General Synod** **by delegate Gary Myers, delegate to GSXXI**

As a first-time delegate to the General Synod, I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to the Southeast Conference for electing me as a delegate, and to our conference minister, the Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Downs, for his hospitality, insight, experience, and organizational skills which helped make this experience enriching and gratifying. I am also extremely grateful to the Rev. Mary Brueggemann for meeting with our Southeast delegation in Huntsville one Saturday and preparing us with thorough, yet concise, information on the restructuring of our national church instrumentalities. Despite the detailed nature of the restructuring process, she made it plain and unpretentious, thus enabling me to vote intelligently on this major issue. Finally, last but not first, I am eternally grateful to God for allowing the Holy Spirit to dwell within our small delegation and lift us above feeling intimidated or inferior because of our small numbers.

There were at least four events during General Synod XXI that had a profound effect on me as a delegate: the film “The Color of Fear,” which dealt with racism in America beyond black and white cultures – open conversations between the two former cultures, and Hispanic and Asian cultures, which were candid and sometimes crude; the overwhelmingly favorable vote for “Full Communion” with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Reformed Church in America; the agreement to move forward in the restructuring of the national instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ, pending the ratification of the amendments by two-thirds of the thirty-nine conferences (if approved, new structure could be put in place by year 2000); and the sermons by the Rev. Dr. Robin R. Meyers, entitled “Dream on, Sweet UCC!” – encouraging us to “dream of the day” when people of faith will have done their dream work so well that they’ll stand out in the crowd, and everyone will know that the heavens and the earth are “permeable” once more – because “to be religious will be non-violent, radically inclusive, and stubbornly hopeful” – and also the closing sermon by the Rev. Barbara K. Lundblad, who exhorted us to be “the United Church of Christ, and not become the United Church of Concerns, or the United Church of

Resolutions or the United Church of Amendments, but the United Church of Christ.”

## **Three Southeast Women Honored**

Ruth Peeples, Nancy Sales and Annie Neal ... smile broadly for the camera after being honored along with a number of other laywomen by the Coordinating Center for Women at General Synod XXI. They were nominated by the Southeast Conference Commission for Women in Church and Society and the Rev. Joyce Myers-Brown, retiring chair of the Commission, joined them for the celebration.

Ruth Peeples is a lovely, warm and radiant person, whom we in the Southeast Conference as used to seeing at the SERRV table during our Annual Meeting selling products from around the world. She has a pattern of service that has been established over her lifetime. Her professional career was in social service. Her vocation beyond the church and outside of her place of occupation frequently involved effort to bring change by contact with political figures. All of this was built upon a firm sense of Christian social justice and service. In Ohio and Tennessee Ruth has been strongly active with, and holding offices in, women's programs of education and service; e.g., regional and local conferences, Church Women United, mission trips to overseas stations, sales agent for SERRV, founding administrator for a battered women's agency and founding director of Good Samaritan ecumenical social service agency. Within the local church Ruth has held various offices and membership in choirs. Ruth conveys the view that if people are in need, the church needs to find the way to meet that need, and then do it.

Nancy Sales is a kind, caring, responsive woman who served as a missionary for the United Church Board for World Ministries in Botswana, teaching English as a Second Language and running Christian Education workshops as she recruited and trained nationals to lead Christian Education in the country. Later, in Zambia, she taught English and some Bible studies in the seminary as well as helping students' spouses prepare for ministry. Nancy is also active in the Southeast Conference. She co-chaired the '96 Women's Retreat "For Such A Time As This" as well as served on the 1997 Annual Meeting Planning Committee. This year she will begin to serve as member-at-large to the Commission on Women in Church and Society. Although she does not regard herself as an expert in any field, Nancy's willingness to undertake any challenge, to carry through

and give credit to others, both affirms them and is an inspiration to all who know her.

Dr. Annie Neal is gifted, affirming, gracious and graceful. Annie is indeed, like Esther, “a woman for such a time as this” serving on the Tennessee Women’s Suffrage Commission, participating in the Nashville Chapter of 100 Black Women, and bringing unstinting commitment to the United Church of Christ – serving with love and vision as the first chair of the Coordinating Center for Women. Annie began as a public school teacher in Roanoke, VA, moved through the ranks from assistant professor to professor and has held many administrative positions. She is currently the Associate Vice President for Educational Development and Support, Meharry Medical College, Nashville. In addition, Annie is presiding, with a firm but gentle hand, as moderator of the Southeast Conference and functioned as stage parliamentarian at General Synod XXI. She works with clarity and candor, concern and caring, commitment and wisdom.

Congratulations to all three of our Honored Laywomen!

## **Annual Meeting of the Conference Keynoter Dr. Charles Foster Challenges Us to Make New Wines for New Skins**

On Friday evening, June 13, 1997, Dr. Charles Foster, Professor of Religion and Education at Candler School of Theology, offered the keynote address of the Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference, laying before us a critical challenge. “Christian education cannot exist,” Dr. Foster said, “as it has for the last 150 years.” Churches and the communities they serve have changed. The wineskins, that is, the congregations, in which we are placing our Christian education ministries, leak terribly.

He continued by noting that church school was developed in a time when there were three institutions which functioned to instruct and guide our children. Through Sunday School, children were taught a catechism, through public schools they were raised up in a spirit of civic Christianity and through their families they were introduced to ways of piety and practice. In today’s world these three institutions have changed radically. Few families pray or read the Bible. Civic education is more likely to take place on a little league field than in public schools. Studies show that 40% of teenagers in mainline denominations participate in life-risking behavior and few teenagers speak with any adults other than their parents.



Dr. Foster proposed that we need to encourage new models of Christian education, among the features of those new models might be some of the following characteristics:

1. Encourage intergenerational education; look to those in their 80s, 90s, and 100s as spiritual leaders, especially for those who are younger.
2. Reclaim the task of teaching in the church. Find new contexts in which to teach. Do not presume that the only time the church can teach is on Sunday morning, and the only place, church.
3. Seek to do ministry in multicultural and multiracial contexts, knowing that all who participate in these contexts will benefit immeasurably from them. However, these contexts require a high degree of intentionality.
4. Develop mission trips and youth camps, times for people to be away and gathered around a common sense of mission or priority in ministry.

Through these and other ways of developing “new wine and new wineskins,” we will together learn that those who love more fully and more widely will become more vital and dynamic Christians.

## **Southeast Conference Annual Meeting/ Faith Works A Success**

The Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ was FUN, EDUCATIONAL, and FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT! The musical revue on Saturday night, put together and narrated by Milton Hurst (with the help of Roger Robbennolt as the storyteller) was fantastic. Milton took us on a tour of music and how it developed, using Southeast Conference folk as entertainers. Sam & Reka Kaetzel shared duets played on their recorders; Dick & Trudy Braun performed on their flutes with Elizabeth Clement singing the vocal line; Carolyn Munchus played solo piano, as did Charles Fulghum; Vincent Perry was on keyboard doing background; Bill & Betty Lloyd sang with Bill on guitar, and Betty also played solo piano; Elizabeth Clement, Milton Hurst, Jerome Gray, and Nan Wright sang as a quartet; Nan and Milton each sang a solo; the First Congregational Christian UCC Ensemble from Montgomery sang several numbers with soloists. Dr. Dorothy Riggins was female vocalist and Jerome Gray was male vocalist from this group. They sang gospel solos beautifully. The keynote address on Friday night by Charles Foster was great and is

covered in a separate news item. The fellowship was, as always, wonderful. The worship, stimulating and full of praise. The workshops were full of information – see separate news item. All in all, we had a very positive response to the Annual Meeting Faith Works-style event. To those who attended, thank you for coming and making it special. To those who didn't make it this year, we hope to see you at the 1998 Annual Meeting, which will be held June 12, 13, 14, 1998.

## **Pastors Recognized for Years of Service**

During a service of recognition at the Annual Meeting, many pastors received certificates commemorating the anniversary of their ordinations. Among these many recognitions, two persons were given plaques lifting up their faithful service to the United Church of Christ.

Mitch Johnson, who had recently served as associate conference minister, was recognized for 50 years of ordained ministry. In receiving the plaque, Mitch thanked all those who had supported him through the years and noted that his first steps into ministry in the United Church of Christ began with a little American Missionary Association college in Texas, from which he graduated.

Joseph Brown was remembered with a plaque commemorating 35 years of ordained ministry. Joe has served in many capacities in the South Alabama/Northwest Florida Association, faithfully upholding the Congregational tradition and serving for years as the moderator of the association, the chair of its Church and Ministry Committee, as well as being a pastor in a number of congregations in the association. Although unable to be present at the Annual Meeting, Joe was presented his plaque several days later at his home in Florida by Dick Sales, immediate past moderator of the Southeast Conference, and Marvin Brand, moderator of the South Alabama/Northwest Florida Association.

## **Annual Meeting Workshops Equip Christian Education Leaders for Ministries of Teaching**

The workshops which took place on Saturday, June 14, 1997, at the Annual Meeting were well received, and many remarked on the excellence of the leadership, that had been assembled for the occasion.

Ginny Nixon, the new chair of the Conference Commission for Christian Education, offered an excellent orientation on the UCC curriculum “The Inviting Word.”

Joe Hoffman provided two workshops. The first, in his capacity as the regional coordinator for UCC Resources in the South, he gave an overview of UCC resources available for equipping educational ministries. Joe also presented a workshop on the new confirmation curriculum “Affirming Faith.”

Pat Goldberg, Minister for Education and the Family, of the Division of Education Publication of the Board for Homeland Ministries, presented workshops on how congregations can equip families for faithful living in this time.

Our keynoter, Chuck Foster, gave a superb overview of the role of Christian education in the life of the church.

Budd Friend-Jones, pastor at Central Congregational, Atlanta, led excellent dialogue workshops concerning children and their role in worship.

Sally Purvis introduced workshop participants to the new UCC curriculum on sexuality for adults, “Created in God’s Image.”

The one workshop which took place off the Shocco Springs campus was a tour of Talladega College, organized by Rodney Franklin, and conducted by students and staff of Talladega. There were many expressions of appreciation and delight as people disembarked from the tour bus. People deeply appreciated this workshop as a glimpse at the wonderful history of the American Missionary Association.

Many participants in workshops expressed their deep appreciation for the quality and thoroughness of the opportunities that were made available.

## ***From Pat Goldberg ...***

Greetings to friends in the Southeast Conference UCC!

It was an honor to be with you during workshop time last Saturday. Thanks, many thanks, for your generous, gracious sharing of insights and ideas. It’s clear that yours is a rich conference and that there are many signs of hope in your churches. The tree is indeed bearing fruit!

\* Here are your ideas—for faith-laden traditions and rituals within the family as well as responses to a number of family situations. May these provide helpful starting points within your own families and as you plan for ministry to and with the families in your churches.

Please keep me informed of family-related events, activities and programs in your churches. Let me know, too, of helpful resources you discover.

May you know many blessings in and beyond your families!

Shalom,

*Patricia J. Goldberg*

Minister for Education in the Family

\* Pat has compiled the ideas from workshop participants and put them on paper. She enclosed 4 sheets, front and back, which you may request from the Conference and which we hope to send out to the churches in the next All-Church mailing.

## **Terry Ogawa Completes Project Oikos**

What Is Project Oikos? It is a project developed by the UCC (Philippines), the ECU in Germany, the UCC (USA), the DOC (USA), and the UCCCanada. It called for four individuals between eighteen and twenty-four years of age from each of the four countries to travel for nine months to those countries while examining the themes of models of mission, integrity of creation, solidarity with women, and economic justice. These individuals lived in a cross-cultural, ecumenical community while acting as a critical mirror to the church and simultaneously strengthening the voices of youth and young adults. They were also asked to create a pedagogical tool to which they replied with an audio tape, a liturgical resource, a workshop, a slide collection, and a book of art and analysis. Interim Conference Minister Ed Mehlhaff wrote a letter of reference for Terry Yasuko Ogawa, from Columbia, South Carolina, and she was chosen to be one of those individuals.

Terry has written a letter to Tim Downs, letting us know she has completed Project Oikos as of March 21, 1997, and is ready to share the questions and visions which she has gathered over the past ten months. To quote from her letter, Terry says, "Through this project I have accumulated so much exciting knowledge and insights, and I would like to share it, especially in our Southeast Conference. I have many ideas, including creating a partner church in the Philippines with one in the Southeast Conference. This is also a way in which I can give back to the church. My theme focuses were the integrity of creation and models of mission. I am available to do anything—workshops, talks, sermons, etc.—for any age group. (I have done all of these sorts of presentations during the past ten months.)

Thank you, Terry, for letting us know of your wonderful resources! We look forward to the churches and the Conference being able to utilize your skills!

If you would like to contact Terry, please call the Conference office.

## **Commission On Religion in Appalachia (CORA)**

**Written by Ed Schneider, UCC Commissioner**

Richard Couto, writing about the people and the region in his book, *APPALACHIA: An American Tomorrow and An American Challenge*, writes this about CORA:

“CORA, the church groups with which it works, and the many projects it supports go between the large, faceless, social, political, and economic forces and the small communities and individual human beings that these forces impact ...

“No other organization can or does speak as well as CORA about the moral resources of social capital—especially the gifted leaders and determined communities—of the entire region ...

“Over the past decade, CORA has emerged as the only region-wide organization with a total and enduring commitment to social and economic justice. CORA now enters its fourth decade, one that will span two centuries. The hope of the region, the nation, and the next century lies in the work, commitments and methods that CORA embodies.”

That extensive quote captures the importance of CORA to the people who live in the thirteen-state region of our country that is at once rich in resources and yet that is covered in poverty. The United Church of Christ has been with CORA from the beginning, and today it is in a major leadership position. The current chairperson is the Rev. Dr. Paul Westcoat, conference minister of Penn West Conference. He succeeded the Rev. Paul Peters, Division of the American Missionary Association. Also, the UCC has provided a major grant to expand the service programs from our Neighbors In Need offering. We can be proud of our part in CORA.

There are three divisions in CORA: the Appalachian Development Projects Coalition (ADPC), the Volunteer Program, and the Cooperative Congregational Development program. In the Appalachian Development Projects Coalition, twelve of the fifty projects (@ 1/4 of them) are in Tennessee and one is in Mississippi—within the bounds of the Southeast Conference. These projects range from community services to

environmental action groups, to training in skills and basic education. In 1996, the Volunteer Program directed work camps for 3,000 persons in eight states building or refurbishing homes, working on farms, staffing children's camps. Carl Bade is a consultant to CORA. In Cooperative Congregational Development, the effort is at "enabling the development of cooperative ministries of justice, advocacy and self-determination."

CORA offers consultant leadership to help local groups organize and address their own needs, to help local groups network, sharing experiences and support, provides seed funding, provides the strength of large numbers to help a local community action group confront an injustice or begin a major project.

The UCC is one of nineteen religious communities and six ecumenical partners which compose CORA, whose office is on the grounds of Church of the Savior (UCC), P.O. Box 52910, Knoxville, TN 37950-2910.

## **Walter and Mary Brueggemann receive honorary degrees from Eden Seminary**

### **(Excerpts from *Eden Events*)**

At the May Commencement Service of Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis, MO, John Bracke, Dean for Academic Life, presented Walter Brueggemann for the conferral of the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. For 25 years Dr. Brueggemann served Eden Seminary as Professor of Old Testament, Evangelical Professor of Biblical Studies, and Dean for Academic Life. He currently serves as the William Marcellus McPheeters Professor of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA. Bracke used the words "a creative and prolific biblical scholar ... stands in the first rank of international Old Testament scholars ... Eden Theological Seminary honors Walter Brueggemann because as a biblical scholar and prophet, he has always been, first and foremost, a child of the church and a teacher of the church ... Walter's scholarship and prophetic voice have been honed ... in the give and take that occurs in church fellowship halls, and at retreat centers over long weekends, and in seminary classrooms where pastors and church leaders are educated."

Marilyn Stavenger, Professor of Practical Theology and Field Education, presented Mary Miller Brueggemann for the conferral of the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. She delivered an eloquent tribute to a "cherished colleagues and beloved friend ... In a time of divided loyalties

and diminished commitment, Mary is faithful to the covenants of her baptism, confirmation, marriage, and the vows of her ordination. Worship leadership and preaching are among Mary's greatest gifts. She has a flair for creative liturgy and the uncanny ability to exegete a congregation ... Mary, we celebrate your incredible gifts for pastoral and teaching ministries, your love for the church, and your passion for the Gospel."

## **The Oasis Seminar**

The Oasis Seminar, an intentional growth center seminar, is a unique experience for ministers and other religious professionals. It is offered as an opportunity to address their often neglected needs for spiritual replenishment. The leaders for this seminar are composed of a group of United Methodist professionals with extensive training in leading groups toward self-realization. It is limited to 12 participants, and is being held at Epworth-by-the-Sea on St. Simons Island, GA, October 6-11, 1997. For more information, call (800) 577-3419.

Nancy Donny, pastor, Covenant United Church of Christ, Columbia, SC, will be attending this seminar and is very enthusiastic about it. To talk with her, call (803) 781-5018 evenings or weekends.

## **Women – Register Now**

"Strangers No More" is the theme of the Southern Regional Meeting to be held September 26-28 in Blowing Rock, North Carolina. The program will feature worship, workshops, tours and plenty of time for fun and fellowship. Special guests include the Rev. Diane Snowa of Suffolk, VA, keynote speaker; the Rev. Loey Powell, Executive Director, Coordinating Center for Women; and the Rev. Steve Miller, Hunger Action, United Church Board for World Ministries.

Blowing Rock Assembly Ground is located in one of the most beautiful areas of the Southeast and offers a rare opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the mountains at the time of year.

Registration forms for this biennial event are available through your church or from the Southeast Conference registrar, Frances J. Smith, 1128 Club Trace, Atlanta, GA 30319. Phone: 404/231-0482. Send completed registration to Frances Smith no later than August 29, 1997. If you need financial assistance, please write that on your registration form. It is really important to register in a timely manner to avoid disappointment in choice of accommodation.

## Emory University Sponsors Christian Education Conference

“Life Together: Small Groups as Learning Communities” – for clergy, students and laity. Here is an opportunity to delve into some of what Chuck Foster was talking about at the Annual Meeting in June – new ways to teach and learn. The Conference will be held at Simpsonwood Retreat Center in Norcross, Thursday-Saturday, February 12-14, 1998. The registration deadline is November 1, 1997. For further information or to register, contact Kim Buchanan; Fax # 404/727-2915; email: bsteven@emory.edu. As soon as their brochures are ready, we will have some in the Conference Office.

## Organist/Music Director position

Circular Congregational Church in Charleston, SC seeks a part-time organist/music director. We seek a creative person to work collegially with the pastors and the Worship Committee to create a music program that will enrich and inspire the spiritual life and theological inquiry of the congregation. 1890 George S. Hutchings two-manual tracker organ, restored 1987. Salary plus benefits commensurate with education and experience. Resumes and audition tapes accepted until September 15, 1997. Address to Music Search Committee, Circular Congregational Church, 150 Meeting Street, Charleston, SC 29401.

## Southeast Conference UCC 1997 OCWM June 30, 1997

### East Alabama-West Georgia Association

CHURCH	4/1-6/30/97	1997 OCWM	1996 OCWM
Alexander City, First	0.00	0.00	0.00
Columbus, United	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dadeville, Elder	228.00	228.00	773.00
East Tallassee, Congregational Christian	0.00	95.00	395.00
LaFayette, Pleasant Grove	461.00	461.00	912.00
LaGrange, Hillside	0.00	0.00	0.00
LaGrange, United	0.00	0.00	309.00
Lanett	1,204.00	1,505.00	3,549.00
Phenix City, Russell Woods	380.00	760.00	1,140.00
Pine Mountain, Oak Grove	0.00	0.00	1,140.00



Roanoke, Antioch	0.00	0.00	570.00
Roanoke, Bethany	0.00	0.00	0.00
Roanoke, Forest Home	0.00	0.00	0.00
Roanoke, New Hope	0.00	570.00	570.00
Roanoke, North Main	380.00	380.00	950.00
Roanoke, Rock Spring	0.00	0.00	0.00
Valley, Pine Forest	0.00	0.00	0.00
Wadley, Corinth Christian	238.00	238.00	476.00
Woodbury, Jones Chapel	1,045.00	1,567.00	2,964.00
	<b>3,936.00</b>	<b>5,804.00</b>	<b>13,748.00</b>

### **Georgia-South Carolina Association**

CHURCH	4/1-6/30/97	1997 OCWM	1996 OCWM
Atlanta, Center Congregational	0.00	0.00	175.00
Atlanta, Central	7,500.00	15,000.00	30,000.00
Atlanta, Central Congregational Women	0.00	200.00	200.00
Atlanta, First	2,750.00	2,750.00	1,727.65
Atlanta, Good Shepherd	0.00	0.00	600.00
Atlanta, Rush	0.00	0.00	0.00
Beachton, Evergreen Congregational	495.00	495.00	0.00
Charleston, Circular	1,000.00	2,500.00	6,000.00
Charleston, Plymouth	0.00	0.00	1,500.00
Columbia, Covenant UCC	0.00	0.00	325.00
Demorest, Federated	0.00	0.00	236.12
GA-SC Association	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hampton, Trinity	0.00	0.00	165.00
Marietta, Amistad	0.00	0.00	0.00
Marietta, Pilgrimage	1,900.00	3,800.00	10,476.00
Midway, Congregational	400.00	400.00	950.00
Savannah, First	0.00	0.00	1,600.00
Thomasville, Bethany Congregational	0.00	0.00	0.00
	<b>14,045.00</b>	<b>25,145.00</b>	<b>53,954.77</b>

### **South Alabama-Northwest Florida Association**

CHURCH	4/1-6/30/97	1997 OCWM	1996 OCWM
Andalusia, Antioch	380.00	380.00	750.00
Andalusia, First CC	55.00	55.00	605.00
Baker, Good Hope	0.00	0.00	0.00
Baker, Pyron	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bonifay, New Effort	0.00	0.00	0.00
Brantley, Liberty Congregational	200.00	200.00	450.00
Brantley, Indian Creek	0.00	0.00	0.00
Clio, New Hope	0.00	0.00	0.00
	<b>635.00</b>	<b>635.00</b>	<b>1,805.00</b>

## Alabama-Tennessee Association

CHURCH	4/1-6/30/97	1997 OCWM	1996 OCWM
Alpine, King's Chapel	265.00	457.50	380.00
Athens, Trinity Congregational	0.00	0.00	300.00
Belvidere, 1st United Church	1,349.00	1,349.00	7,925.00
Birmingham, 1st Congregational Church	2,800.00	3,800.00	6,600.00
Birmingham, Pilgrim	2,000.00	2,950.00	5,400.00
Chattanooga, Pilgrim	2,517.50	5,035.00	14,880.00
Chattanooga, Sheares Memorial	200.00	200.00	0.00
Crossville, United Christian Church UCWF	0.00	0.00	340.00
Crossville, United Christian Church	800.00	1,075.00	3,816.50
Cullman, St. John's	1,350.00	3,375.00	8,100.00
Deer Lodge, Congregational	300.00	600.00	1,200.00
Fairfield Glade, Community Church	925.00	1,850.00	3,700.00
Garden City, Congregational Christian	115.50	231.00	462.00
Hanceville, Mountain Grove	0.00	0.00	0.00
Huntsville, United Church	0.00	1,800.00	6,000.00
Knoxville, Church of the Savior	0.00	0.00	1,400.00
Marion, First Congregational	0.00	0.00	200.00
Montgomery, Community Congregational	2,550.00	2,550.00	2,500.00
Montgomery, First	475.00	475.00	7,600.00
Nashville, 1st United Church	1,250.01	2,499.98	5,000.04
Nashville, Brookmeade	350.00	350.00	2,392.25
Nashville, Howard	150.00	350.00	600.00
Pleasant Hill, Community Church	4,500.00	9,000.00	18,050.00
Sweetwater, First	250.00	250.00	250.00
Talladega, First Congregational	100.00	200.00	0.00
Tougaloo, Union UCC	0.00	0.00	0.00
Waverly, United Community Church	40.00	40.00	194.73
	<b>22,287.01</b>	<b>38,437.48</b>	<b>97,290.52</b>

## Raising a Roof for Rosie

The Iowa-Southeast Conference Work Team is at it again. This summer's project is to build a house in Tunica, Mississippi for Rosie and her seven boys. The first team consisting of six people from the Southeast Conference and ten Iowans gathered during the week of June 15th. Our reception was mixed; the people greeted us with open arms, but the weather was very uncooperative! Torrential rains flooded the footings for the house, and saturated the ground. Thanks to the generosity of Brooks (Tunica Habitat coordinator) and Dick Taylor, we were able to work under the shelter of their large carport and have the use of their workshop for storage. During the frequent rains, two tables and eight bunk beds were constructed, and doors were prepared for installation when the house is

built. Rosie and two of her boys worked with us, following Habitat's policy of "sweat equity."

In addition to enjoying the fun of working together, the team enjoyed true Southern hospitality when Dick Taylor prepared a wonderful catfish dinner complete with banana pudding. Not only is he a fine cook, but he can tell great stories, too. One of the best things about the work crew experience is the chance to learn more about different parts of our Southeast region and Iowa.

Carol and Barry Barnes, Iowa work team leaders, are expecting a total of 60 Iowans coming in various teams to complete the house by the end of the summer. Contributions of labor and materials have come mostly from Iowa. Rosie, herself, will begin paying off the mortgage to Habitat, Tunica, when the house is complete.

Although much remains to be done to raise Rosie's Roof, the work crew is already considering ideas for next year's project. Suggestions are welcomed for 1998, and more Southeast Conference volunteers will be most welcome, too. We'll keep you informed.

## ***Around the Conference***

### **Churches in Search**

Pilgrim Congregational, Birmingham, AL

United Congregational Christian, LaGrange, GA

First Congregational, Marion, AL

St. John's United, Cullman, AL

United Community, Waverly, TN

### **New Pastors**

A new associate pastor has come to Central Congregational, Atlanta. Welcome to Kristi Denham and her two sons, Jesse, a sophomore at Morehouse, and Gabriel, a freshman at Druid Hills High School. She started August 6th after having been newly ordained in the northwest U.S.

### **Called as Pastor**

Angie Wright, July 27, Congregational Christian Church, Garden City, AL.

William Lloyd, Trinity United, Hampton, GA.

### **Installations**

The Rev. George E. Blair III, First United, Belvidere, TN, June 29.

The Rev. Craig M. Fairall, Morgan County Parish, Wartburg, TN.

## **Prayers**

Continue to keep Joe Brown in your prayers. I talked with him on August 8th, and he is taking at one day at a time. He continues to be active in ministry when he can. Sunday, August 10th, he is to serve Communion to the First Congregational folk in Andalusia, AL.

Also, J. C. Dollar spoke with Floyd Carmack and asked for our prayers for his son, Scott, who has cancer.

## **Births**

Isaac Hunt Mingus, 4 lbs., 12 oz., June 3, 1997 (6 weeks early) to John Mingus and Kim Hunt (Pilgrim, Chattanooga). Isaac is home and doing beautifully—so are his parents!

Also, Don and Joyce Nelson became proud grandparents this spring.

## **Celebrations**

North Main Congregational Christian Church (UCC) honored Joe French Sunday, April 27 on the occasion of his 95th birthday. Joe has been in the active ministry for over 68 years.

Joe and Mozelle Brown celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with their friends and children on May 3rd by renewing their wedding vows in a ceremony at Good Hope Church in Florida.

Chris Hester (ordained this past year) and Lorna Arayan were married on Friday, the 8th of August, at 7:00 p.m. Best wishes and congratulations to you all.

## **Sympathy**

Our hearts go out to the family of Shirley Bowen, former editor of the *Southeast News*, who died on June 19, 1997; to Dwight Andrews on the death of his father on July 21, 1997; to the family of Helen Johnson, widow of the Rev. Karlton Johnson, who served in stewardship on the National level and was active in the Southeast Conference when they arrived here. Helen died Sunday, July 13, 1997. She was interviewed a short time ago by the UCC Office of Communication for a video made on prayer that will soon be released. The portion of the video that she was on was shared, unedited, at her funeral.

Ross Ensminger, ordained professor of Sociology at Blackburn College, Carlinville, IL, for 29 years, died on June 20. Ross and his wife Margaret came to Pleasant Hill in 1981 and have been active both in church and community affairs.

I just received word that Carey Andes, wife of Bill Andes, a former conference minister for the Southeast Conference, died over the weekend of August 9-10. Bill's current address is Elon College, 207 Atkinson Avenue, Elon, NC 27244. Phone: (910) 584-3310.

## **CONFERENCE CALENDAR '97-'98**

### August

15-16 – Fri/Sat	GA/SC Association Retreat – Simpsonwood
19-21 – Tues-Th	Conference Staff Retreat
23 – Sat	Church and Ministry Committee, Center Congregational, Atlanta
24 – Sun	Congregational Christian, Lanett, AL – Tim preaching
29-30 – Fri/Sat	Board of Directors Retreat – Central Congregational, Atlanta
31 – Sun	Congregational Christian, Garden City, AL – Tim preaching

### September

5-6 – Fri/Sat	AL/TN Association Annual Meeting
7 – Sun	United Church, Huntsville, AL – Tim preaching
12-13 Fri/Sat	Board of Directors meeting
12-13 Fri/Sat	GA/SC Association Annual Meeting – Congregational, Midway, GA
21 – Sun	First Congregational, Atlanta – 130th Anniversary, Homecoming
26-28 Fri-Sun	Southern Regional Women's Retreat – Blowing Rock, NC
28 – Sun	Circular Congregational, Charleston, SC – Tim preaching

### October

4 – Sat	SAL/NWFL Association Annual Meeting
5 – Sun	Antioch Congregational, Andalusia, AL – Tim preaching
12 – Sun	St. John's United, Cullman, AL – Tim preaching
18 – Sat	EAL/WGA Association Annual Meeting – LaGrange, GA

19 – Sun Church of the Savior, Knoxville, TN – Tim preaching

### November

2 – Sun Covenant UCC, Columbia, SC – Tim preaching  
14-15 Fri/Sat Program Planning Retreat

### December

5-6 Fri/Sat EAL/WGA Ministerial Christmas Party  
25 – Thu Christmas Day – OFFICE CLOSED  
26 – Fri OFFICE CLOSED

### January

9-10 Fri/Sat Board of Directors meeting  
17 – Sat OCLL workshop

### March

17-18 Fri/Sat Mini-Camp – Noah's Ark Retreat – Panama City, FL  
Board of Directors meeting

### June

12-14 Fri-Sun Southeast Conference Annual Meeting

## **THE SOUTHEAST NEWS**

Published by the Southeast Conference

United Church of Christ

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Administrative Assistant, Gerri Ryons-Hudson

Moderator, Annie Neal

Vice Moderator, Jimmy Pilkington

Secretary, H. Donald Hewett

Treasurer, David Speno

Alabama-Tennessee Association Moderator, Ed Schneider

East Alabama-West Georgia Association Moderator, Jimmy Pilkington

Georgia-South Carolina Association Moderator, Artis Johnson

South Alabama-Northwest Florida Association Moderator, Marvin Brand

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**This transcription was recorded on November 3 and 4, 2013 by Mike Stroud, director of Project 66-16, an initiative to record, compile and write the history of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.**

